



FLORAL CALENDAR OF JAPAN

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FLORAL CALENDAR
OF JAPAN

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THE HANASYOBU (IRIS)

By Kokei Kobayashi

FLORAL CALENDAR OF JAPAN

BY
T. MAKINO, D. Sc.
and
GENZIRŌ OKA



BOARD OF TOURIST INDUSTRY
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EDITORIAL NOTE

It is a common desire among tourists to learn something of the culture of the countries they visit, as well as to see their beautiful scenery. To see is naturally easier than to learn, but flying visits merely for sightseeing furnish neither the time nor opportunity for more than a passing acquaintance with the culture of any foreign people. This is specially true of Japan and her people.

The Board of Tourist Industry recognizes both the obligation and the difficulty of providing foreign tourists with accurate information regarding the various phases of Japan's culture. It is, therefore, endeavouring to meet this obligation, as far as possible, by publishing this series of brochures.

The present series will, when completed, consist of more than a hundred volumes, each dealing with a different subject, but all co-ordinated. By studying the entire series, the foreign student of Japan will gain an adequate knowledge of the unique culture that has evolved in this country through the ages.

Board of Tourist Industry,
Japanese Government Railways.

NOTE

The Japanese Government has adopted a new system of spelling for certain Romanized Japanese syllable sounds. Though the spelling has been modified, the pronunciation remains the same. The modified spelling is given below with the old phonetic spelling in brackets :

si (shi)		
ti (chi)	tu (tsu)	
hu (fu)		
zi (ji)		
sya (sha)	syu (shu)	syo (sho)
tya (cha)	tyu (chu)	tyo (cho)
zya (ja)	zyu (ju)	zyo (jo)

Naturally, the change has caused the spelling of certain familiar names of places and things to be altered, for instance :

Old Spelling	New Spelling
<u>Shinto</u> shrine	<u>Sinto</u> shrine
<u>Chion</u> -in temple	<u>Tion</u> -in temple
Mt. <u>Fuji</u>	Mt. <u>Huzi</u>
<u>Chanoyu</u>	<u>Tyanoyu</u>
<u>Chosen</u>	<u>Tyosen</u>
<u>Jujutsu</u>	<u>Zyuzyutu</u>
<u>Jinrikisha</u>	<u>Zinrikisya</u>

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Mount Huzi and cherry blossoms

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

(I) THE WEALTH OF THE JAPANESE FLORA

The chain of islands which make up Japan is situated in the Pacific Ocean in close proximity to the eastern coast of the Asiatic continent, and forms a long, gently curved arc extending for 3,000 miles from north to south. The islands lie scattered along this arc, which stretches from latitude 50.55 on the north to lat. 21.46 on the south, thus covering some 30 degrees of latitude in all. Further, the coasts of Japan are washed by both warm and cold ocean currents, and the country possesses, for its small area, a large number of high mountains running from north to south, among which Mount Huzi, rising 12,467 feet above the sea-level, stands first: these factors have had the effect of diversifying to a large extent the temperature, rainfall, and soil of the various districts, with the result that the distribution of both the terrestrial and marine flora shows the most extraordinary variations.

Variations of temperature in themselves exert a great influence on the constitution of the plant world, so much so that a difference of only 1°C . brings about changes in the flora. Not only do differences of latitude cause such changes of temperature, but, as is well known, the temperature varies according to the altitude, a rise of 500–600 feet bringing about, on the average, a drop of 1°C . Therefore, in Japan, which extends over 30 degrees

of latitude, and has a central mountain-range attaining a height of 6,500–10,000 feet, there are, as will be readily understood, very great variations of temperature in the different districts; and these variations exert an almost inconceivable influence upon the constitution of the plant world. In Taiwan (Formosa), with an average temperature of 20° , tropical and subtropical vegetation flourishes but as one goes northwards, this gradually disappears, and in the Honsyū (Main Island), which has an average temperature of 15° , plants belonging to the warm or temperate zone are most common. When one goes still further north, to Hokkaidō and Karahuto (South Saghalin), arctic or subarctic vegetation reigns supreme. These observations refer to flat country only, for in Formosa, for example, although it is characterized by tropical or subtropical vegetations, arctic plants can be found on the mountains that traverse the country and are of more than 10,000 feet in height.

Thus, if we consider merely these variations of temperature, we see how great is their influence upon Japan's flora. But, in addition to these, we must take into account humidity, and the innumerable differences in the natural features of the various districts with all their complexities, so that it is easy to understand why a country like Japan with its peculiar geographical conditions should have so rich and so varied a flora.

According to the theory held by geologists, the chain of islands now known as Japan became separated from the Asiatic mainland some 400,000 years ago. Owing to Japan having thus been joined to the mainland in ancient times, the distribution of plants in Japan does not differ



Alpine flowers

greatly from that of the mainland. The flora of Japan belongs in general to what botanists call the East-Asiatic plant region; but, as has been pointed out above, owing to the position of the country, the influence of the warm and cold currents, the complexity of the topography and the nature of the soil, the abundance of the rainfall, etc., the flora has evolved to a remarkable degree, so that the flora of the more developed type alone consists of nearly 10,000 different species, and characteristic species like the *katura*, *hinoki*, *yamazakura*, *tubaki*, *yatude*—new species and varieties—are being discovered in rapid succession. At all events, Japan possesses, for its area, extremely numerous species of plants.

(2) THE FOUR SEASONS IN JAPAN AND THE JAPANESE LOVE OF PLANTS

On the west, Japan faces the Asiatic mainland, on the east, it has the Pacific Ocean before it; it is narrow from east to west, long from north to south, and its greater part lies in the temperate zone. Because of its position, and because of the monsoons that blow between the Asiatic mainland and the Pacific, the cycle of the four seasons in Japan is fairly regular. That spring is warm, summer hot, autumn cool, and winter cold is the common opinion held by everyone in Japan. According to our meteorology, spring in Japan extends from *rissyun* (February 4th or 5th) to the day before *rikka*, i. e. May 6th; summer from *rikka* to the day before *rissyū*, i. e. August 8th; autumn from *rissyū* to the day before *rittō*, i. e. November 7th or



The Japanese never fail to cultivate flowers in their gardens

8th; winter from *ritto* to the day before the *rissyun* of the following year; the calendar, however, for convenience' sake, divides the seasons as follows: spring consists of March, April, May; summer of June, July, August; autumn of September, October, November; and winter of December, January, February.

The clear distinction of these four seasons is marked also in the plant world by the efflorescence of the different seasons, by the *sinryoku* ("fresh green"), and by the crimson foliage and the falling leaves of autumn, the time of which, for each part of the country, is more or less fixed.

The Japanese, who are brought up in such natural surroundings, have, from ancient times, been sensitive to the changes of the seasons, and taken a special interest in, and developed a special way of looking at flowers and trees. Of course, it is not merely a question of surroundings, and there must have been something in the composition of the Japanese people to give them such a temper; but it is undeniable that their environment has also been instrumental in fostering its growth. It is almost unknown for Japanese to admire simply the beauty of a flower: going beyond this, through the form of the flower, they admire nature. Let us give a concrete example. One *nogiku* or wild camomile is put in a vase. In such a case, the Japanese do not look upon this as being simply an adornment of the room: in this one *nogiku* they endeavour to appreciate the life of the *nogiku* in nature and, from this, the scenery of autumn fields. For this reason, special ways of using flowers as decorations have been elaborated. Thus there came into existence the *ikebana* or flower-arrangement and the *bonsai* or potted dwarf

plants peculiar to Japan, as well as the Japanese gardens. In Japan, varied natural surroundings never being far away, the people are usually able to keep in close contact with nature; but even when they live in large towns and are comparatively far removed from the country, they can have recourse to gardens, for almost every Japanese house has a garden of some kind, and they lead for the most part a life close to the earth. If one has the soil, one never fails tenderly to cultivate flowers: of such are the Japanese. And it is from this that the special relationship between the Japanese and the flowers was born.

In the Floral Calendar that follows, something is said about the flowers that are interwoven into the life of the Japanese. Lack of space prevents us from writing of them all, and we are able to give but a few fragments. But we believe that even the little we give will enable the reader to acquire an understanding of the love of Japanese for flowers.



A family crest, designed
from pine



JANUARY

In Japanese we have a phrase, *matsu-no-ki no Nihon*—"Japan for pine-trees." Probably no other country in the world has so many pine-trees growing everywhere as Japan has, and there is probably no other people that loves pine-trees as much as the Japanese do. In Japanese landscapes we may say that pine-trees are almost always depicted as one of the most important features, as you may see if you look at old Japanese pictures. Pines are found growing in the mountains and valleys of Japan wherever the climate permits; and for our gardens we naturally choose pines as being the most important of garden trees. In ancient times, when communication facilities were not well developed, only the larger towns were connected with one another by means of highways, along the sides of which rows of trees were planted: even there—although, it is true, there are a few cases of cryptomerias being used—, pine-trees form by far the greater number. In literature, the love of the Japanese for the pine-tree finds expression as early as the second volume of the *Koziki* ("Records of Ancient Events," 712 A.D.), and innumerable instances occur in the *monogatari* (tales, romances), *uta* (poems, songs), and *haiku* (short poems). But the passage that has left the deepest impression on my mind is one written by the famous writer Lafcadio Hearn, who lived for over ten years in Japan (1889-1904), and who, out of his love for our country, finally became



Kadomatsu or "gate pine" in the New Year's decorations

a Japanese subject and even took a Japanese name—Koizumi-Yakumo. One rainy day, when Hearn was walking in the grounds of a certain old temple at the bottom of Higasiyama in Kyoto, he happened to see four or five towering pines standing before him in the mist created by smoke-like rain. In that moment he received a really clear impression of what Japan is, and he wrote: "Up till now I thought that Japanese India-ink paintings were abstractions, fabrications as it were: now, for the first time, I know that they represent real scenes." We do not remember the author's exact words, but the sense is as we have given it. Reading this passage we thought to ourselves that it was here that Lafcadio Hearn, through those pine-trees, came to see the face of the real Japan.

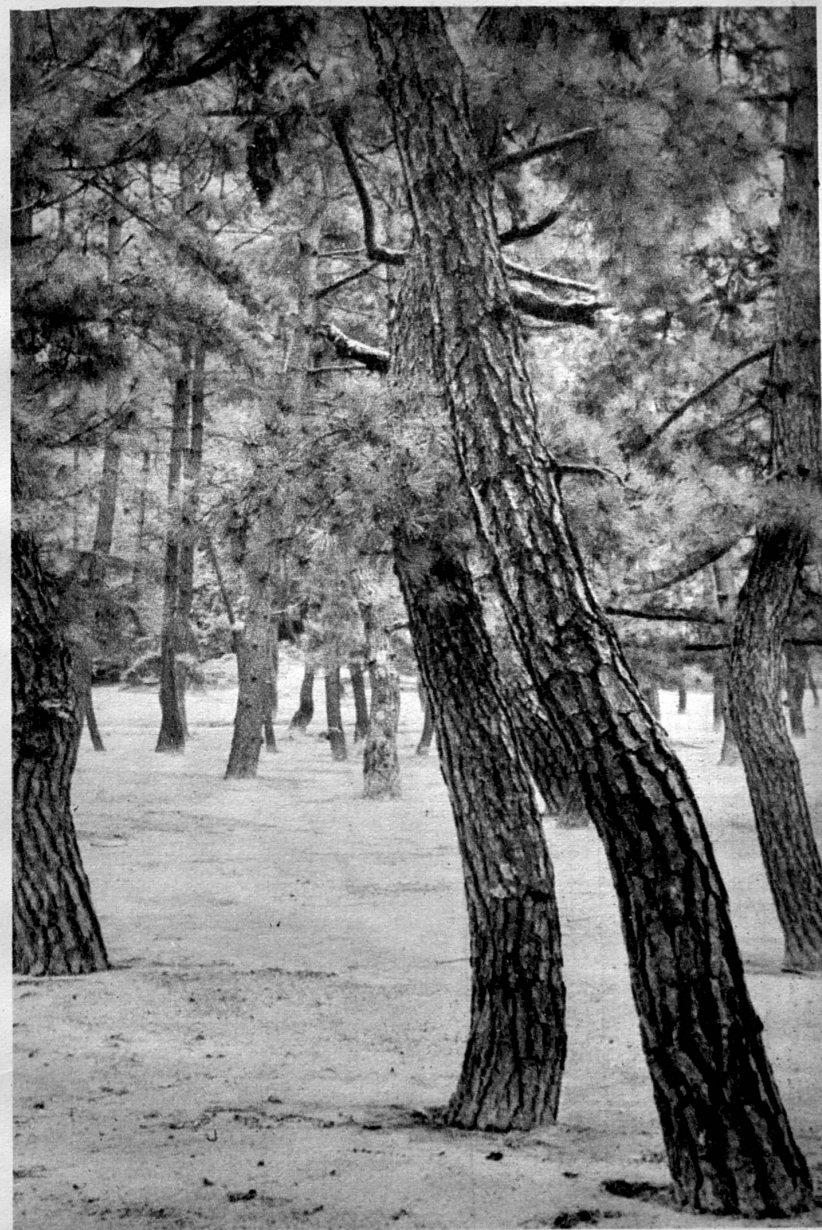
The pine-tree, whose being is thus woven into the life and art of the Japanese, has been prized from ancient times and in every part of the country. It is in the month of January, however, that people set greatest store by it, for it is indispensable in the New Year celebrations. In the New Year each house sets up two pines in front of the gate or doorway, one on each side. This decoration is called *matukazari* ("pine decoration") or *kadomatsu* ("gate pine"). In certain places, the decoration is limited to pine-trees only, whereas in others, bamboo and plum, the latter being a relatively recent addition, are used as well. This custom is several hundreds of years old, but its form has, of course, changed little by little during its long history. The reason why the pine-tree plays so important a part in the New Year celebrations is that its leaves are evergreen, and it withstands both heat and cold, remaining fresh and vivid throughout the four seasons, and

attains an exceeding great age: thus it has the meaning of "prosperity unchanging for ever," and the people's desire for such a life has created a custom where the pine-tree serves as the symbolic expression of this. Thus, from olden times, the pine has been chosen as the flower for January.

The bamboo is added because it is always a bright green and stands up perfectly straight, and its strength and toughness are extolled; the plum because, in the depth of winter, braving the snow, it puts out fair and noble blossoms: the brave face of these blossoms, and the sturdiness of its trunk, which, though it ages, does not lose its vigour, are regarded as symbolizing "the beauty of long life." In this connection we would point out that pine, bamboo, and plum when combined are habitually used as a decoration in celebrations of births, marriages, and age.

Further, in the *matukazari*, a new straw rope (known as *simenawa*) is twisted over the gateway, and pieces of white paper are hung from it; leaves of the fern *uraziro*, fruit of the *daidai* (*Citrus Aurantium*, subsp. *amara*: bitter orange), and branches of the *yabukōzi* (*Bladhia japonica*) with their red berries, as well as other things, are fastened to it. Perhaps all this signifies purification and abundance of crops.

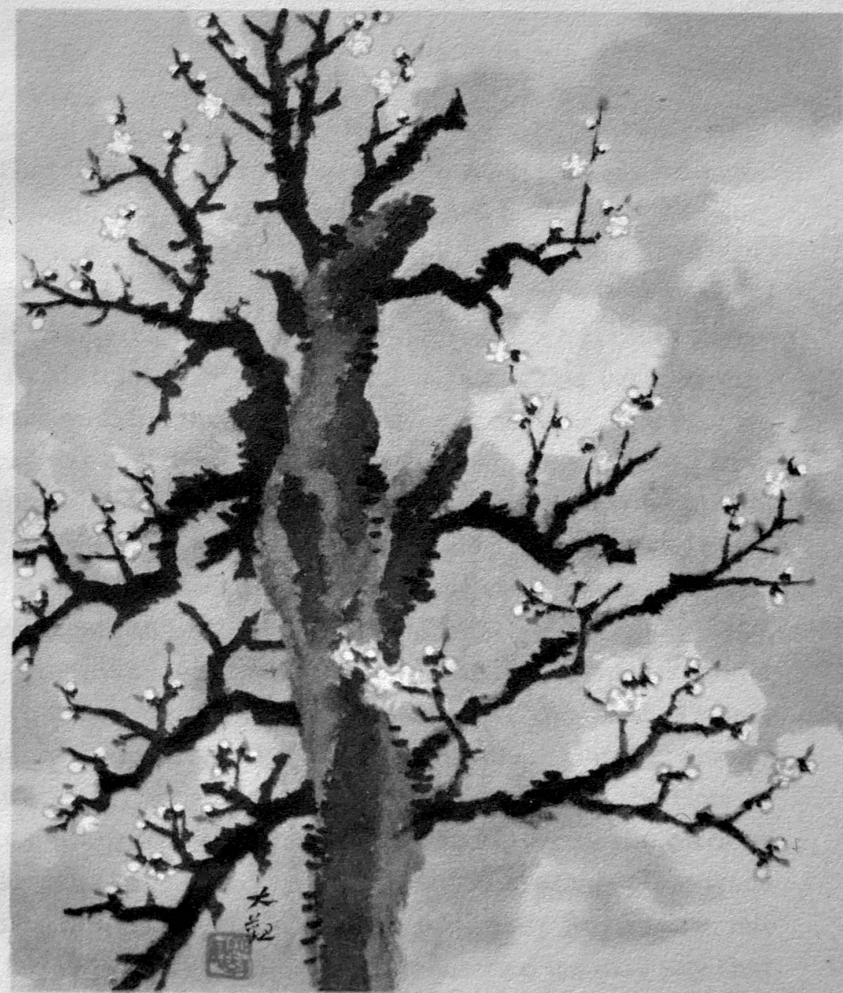
There are fifteen species of pine growing wild in Japan, among which the *kuromatsu* (*Pinus Thunbergii*: "black pine") and the *akamatsu* (*P. densiflora*: "red pine") are the commonest; for *kadomatsu* the "black pine" is mostly used. The "black pine," which has stiff leaves and a black trunk, is also called *omatsu* ("male pine"); in



Pine forest

contradistinction from this, the "red pine" with its soft leaves and reddish trunk is known as *mematu* ("female pine").

It may seem a little strange to include the pine among Japan's flowers, but we have put it on the first page of this Floral Calendar because of its long association with our customs and the affection we Japanese feel for it. Among the flowering plants of January we would mention here two, the *hukuzusō* (*Adonis amurensis*) and the *suisen* (*Narcissus tazetta*, var. *chinensis*: narcissus). Tradition says that the *hukuzusō* never fails to flower on the first day of the year (*ganzitu*): for this reason it is also called *ganzitusō* ("first-day plant"). It bears small yellow flowers somewhat resembling in shape those of the anemone, and which give an impression of fullness and abundance. Its name being auspicious—"the plant (*sō*) of happiness (*huku*) and long life (*zyu*)"—, people take a special delight in it. Usually it is cultivated and is seen in the form of a small potted plant; the shorter ones have stalks only one inch long, the taller ones are about 2 inches and bear pretty flowers. It is a flower with which the Japanese have been intimate from olden times. The narcissus is also cultivated to be admired. A perennial of the Amaryllidaceae family, its flowers impress us with their fresh purity and nobility. The narcissus occurs also in Greek mythology, and is found in abundance in the West; at the same time it is a flower that has become blended in the life of the Japanese.



THE WHITE PLUM

By Taikwan Yokoyama

FEBRUARY

Although, according to the year, it may be a day earlier or a day later, generally speaking the meteorological spring *rissyun* arrives on the 4th of February. But our present solar calendar makes this month the last month of winter in Japan. The second month was anciently known in Japan as *kisaragi*, and would correspond roughly to March today. The name *kisaragi* is a very appropriate one, for it means *kiteiru ue ni sara ni kiru* or "to wear more clothes on top of what one is wearing," and February is indeed in central Japan the coldest month in the whole year. For this reason the name *kisaragi* would seem more suitable for our present February than for the second month of the lunar calendar.

In this season of intense cold, the flower that blossoms in the face of the frost and snow is the *ume* (*Prunus Mume*: plum-tree), being the so-called pioneer among flowers. There are appreciable differences in the time of blossoming according to the temperature of the various districts. Even in central Japan, there are plum-trees blossoming along the warm coasts already in January, but as far as the Tokyo district is concerned we may say that nearly all the plum-blossoms used in the New Year decorations are hot-house grown. The varieties of the plum are, however, very numerous, and there are certain kinds, such as the *tōzibai*, *hayaume*, etc., which blossom in the middle of the lunar month of December. But it is most



The *ume* or plum-blossoms

usual, and most practicable, to consider the plum as being the flower for February.

The plum is a large deciduous tree, and bears beautiful white, red, or pink flowers, each with five petals. It constitutes, with the cherry and peach, one of the three most beautiful flowering trees of Japan. The trunk of the plum, as opposed to that of the cherry, which is delicate and slender, is rugged and twisted; and though half the trunk be rotten and hollow and at first sight appears to be dead, it is really still full of life, and continues year after year to put out new branches and leaves and flowers; for the life of the tree is extremely long. The blossoms of the plum-tree have been held in great esteem by the Japanese people from ancient times: the length of the tree's life, the way in which the beautiful flowers unexpectedly come out from the old trunks having a charm of their own, the noble appearance of the blossoms, and the delicate fragrance which they emit in the depth of winter when nearly all other flowers are as yet asleep,—it is for such reasons as these that the plum is admired. We have already, in the January section spoken about the adding of plum to pine and bamboo decorations in celebrations. The opening of the plum-blossoms may be said to be, for the Japanese, the first tidings of spring. Although the plum is a native of China, it was naturalized in all parts of Japan already in ancient times, and there now exist more than four hundred cultivated varieties. They are tenderly nurtured both as garden trees and as *bonsai*, and appreciated for their flowers; at the same time they are useful because they yield fruit for food. For this reason in making a plum-grove a sunny slope is chosen. The fruits

have stones in them, and ripen about June or July. They are very trat, and are pickled in salt and eaten as *umebosi*.

The plum has a history of more than a thousand years since it was first naturalized in Japan, and, needless to say, has become completely assimilated in the life of the Japanese people. Like the pine, it has come to have a deep connection with Japanese art. In painting, "the red and white plum *byōbu*" of Ogata-Kōrin (1658-1716) is very famous, but among the painters of birds and flowers so many have depicted the plum that we should probably be justified in saying that there is none who has not done so. Again, in literature, there are many episodes concerning the plum in the Heian period (784-1192), the period when Japanese literature really began. Among these, none has left a deeper impression upon the Japanese than the story of the Sadaizin ("Minister of the Left") Sugawara-no-Mitizane, who, condemned to exile for a crime of which he was innocent, composed, when the time for him to depart came, the following poem to a plum-tree he had long cherished:

*Koti hukaba nioi okose yo ume no hana
aruzi nasi tote haru na wasureso!*

"When the east wind blows,
emit thy perfume, plum-blossom;
Because thy master is away,
forget not the spring"

and thereupon set out for his remote place of exile. The deep sympathy which we feel for the hero of this tragedy becomes intensified because of his affection for the plum-tree.



Plum grove at Minabe, Wakayama Prefecture

The custom of holding plum-viewing parties and of composing poems (*waka* or *haiku*) in honour of the blossoms has flourished from ancient times. Hardly able to await the coming of spring the people eagerly throng to the places noted for their blossoms; in recent years special trains have been provided for people wishing to visit the plum-groves in near proximity to the larger towns.

Since February is extremely cold, there are very few plants in flower. We may mention the *hinagiku* (*Bellis perennis*), a member of the Compositae, whose flower-stalk, some 3-5 inches long, rises from among its leaves and bears small, pretty flowers, and the *katakuri* (*Erythronium japonicum*), which grows under trees in mountainous districts and bears a purple six-petalled flower with a drooping head. After the middle of the month there is indeed a feeling that spring is no longer far away.

MARCH

When, while still thinking how cold it is, we hear the voice of March, we experience an indefinable sense of relief, for we know that whether it snows or whether it freezes it is merely the last of the cold weather; during this time, the cold is gradually with each day becoming less, and the mountains and rivers, trees and plants—all natural objects—in some way take on an appearance of life: spring has come.

On March 3rd the people greet the *momo-no-sekku* ("The Peach-blossom Festival"), when their hearts swell with a feeling that it is really spring. The *momo-no-sekku* is also known as *hinamaturi* ("The Doll Festival"), and is a festival for young girls. A *hinadan* or "doll-stand," covered with a kind of scarlet baize (*himōsen*), is set up in the room, and on it are placed various kinds of dolls and accessories representing the life of the Imperial Court in ancient Japan. What must never be lacking in this festival, as indeed its name shows, is one or two sprays of *momo* (*Prunus Persica*: peach) inserted in a vase. This also is a custom dating from ancient times, and has become one of the regular observances of the month of March (for which reason the peach is known as the flower for March); but, in reality, only hot-house peaches are in blossom at this time. Though only hot-house ones are to be had, yet without the pink of the flowers, the plump roundness of the flower-buds, and the green of the leaf-buds just



The Doll Festival (look at flowers in a vase)

coming out, the festival cannot be said to be correctly celebrated. Sometimes rape-flowers in graceful yellow clusters are added. These are, of course, for the most part hot-house products. The festival is held in order to bestow blessing upon young girls, and the peach, in this connection, is said to have the power of driving away devils. The origin of this belief is perhaps to be traced back to the legend, famous from olden times, of Momotarō's conquest of Onigashima ("Devils' Island").

Originally in Japan there were no native peaches, but tradition tells us of the existence of peaches in Japan already in the prehistoric legendary period (in Japanese called *kamiyo* "the divine age"). In the first volume of the *Koziki*, to which we drew attention in the January section, in the part dealing with the earliest age of Japanese mythology, mention is made of the fruit of the peach: from this we may know that the peach must have been introduced from the Continent in very ancient times. The species is the same as that now found growing wild in the neighbourhood of Peking, but it has become altered by cultivation; it is a large deciduous tree. The blossoms appear before the leaves do; bright pink is the commonest colour, but white, reddish purple, and variegated red and white ones are also found, and there are trees bearing red blossoms on one branch, white ones on another. These are trees appreciated for their blossom, but with the improvement of varieties cultivated for the sake of their fruit, new kinds are being produced. The warm districts extending from central to south-western Japan are suitable for the cultivation of the fruit-bearing varieties. The fruit ripens about July or August.



The momo or peach-blossoms

In March, in the warmer parts of Japan, the *tubaki* (*Camellia japonica*: camellia) blooms. It is a large ever-green tree, which grows wild in the fields and mountains; its leaves have a leathery texture, and are thick and fleshy, with a pronounced glossiness. The camellia is especially common in the Loochoo Islands, the southern part of Kyūsyū, and the Izu Islands (Ōshima etc.), whereas if we go as far as Hokkaidō wild ones are not to be found. The flowers of the wild species are wheel-shaped, and have a diameter of some 3 inches; there are numerous stamens surrounded by five or six petals and the contrast of the yellow anthers with the scarlet-red petals strongly indicates a hot country as the tree's home. The bases of the petals and the stamens being joined, the flower falls as a single piece. In the case of most flowers the bringing of the pollen to the ovules is effected by butterflies or bees,

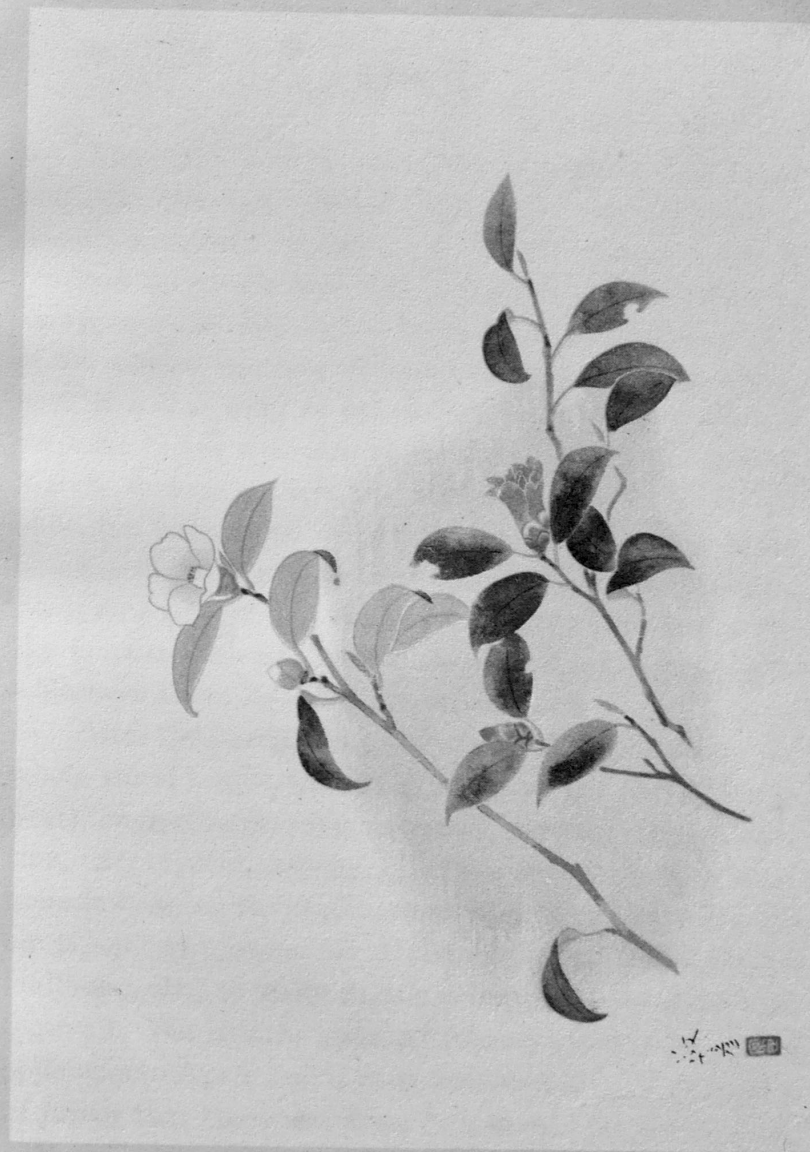


The *tubaki* or camellia

but the camellia offers a rare instance of pollination carried out by small birds. The fruit thus formed yields camellia oil, which is considered to be the finest hair oil that exists.

In addition to the wild species there are some hundreds of cultivated varieties prized for gardens and *bonsai* (potted dwarf plants). As to the variety of colours, there are white ones, pink ones, scarlet ones, mottled ones; then there are single and double petalled kinds, varieties in which different flowers come from one and the same root, and varieties with mottled leaves: in a word, a great number of novelties have been produced.

Towards the end of March, all kinds of tree buds and plant buds come out, and all the countryside begins to look gay; and it is also at this time that people generally sow flower seeds.



THE WABISUKE (A KIND OF CAMELLIA)

APRIL

There is a popular saying in Japan that “both heat and cold last only till the equinox.” This means that when the spring equinox, i. e. March 21st or 22nd, is reached, no matter how cold a year it may be, there is an appreciable sensation of warmth, and that the coming of the autumn equinox on September 23rd or 24th brings with it a lessening of the severe heat of summer, and we enter upon a season of refreshing coolness. During March, however, there are still days when cold winds blow, but with April we get the real spring, this month being, with October, the best time of the year in Japan. Each day we feel that the days are growing longer; the sky is clear without a single cloud, and yet it has a pale whiteness about it—such are April days.

After the peach come, one after the other, making the whole world bright, the *nasi* (*Pirus montana* var. *Rehderi*: pear), *anzu* (*Prunus ansu*: apricot), *sumomo* (*Prunus salicina*, var. *typica*), *tintyōge* (*Daphne odora*), *kobusi* (*Magnolia kobus*), *mokuren* (*Magnolia liliflora*), *rengyō* (*Rangium japonicum*), *yamabuki* (*Kerria japonica*), *kaidō* (*Malus Halliana*), etc., so many that it is impossible to enumerate them all. But it is the *sakura** (cherry) that is the queen of flowers in April, and it is so representative of all flowers in Japan that the word *hana* (“flowers”) by itself means *sakura*.

* Vide Tourist Library Vol. 3: *Sakura* (Japanese Cherry).



The sidarezakura or "weeping cherry"

*Mi-Yosino no sakura saki keri teiō no
ue naki ni niru haru no hana kana*

"The cherries of Yosino have blossomed—
The flowers of spring
that are like the supreme ruler"

This is indeed what we really feel. How right we think it is that the cherry should be the favourite flower of the Japanese, for its splendour when it blooms and for its gallantry when it falls!

The cherry is distributed throughout Asia, but it is in Japan that most of the species occur, and Japan is considered as the central region in the distribution. Furthermore, species having beautiful flowers are to be found only in Japan. From Karahuto and Tisima (the Kurile Islands) in the north to Formosa in the south, from low plains to high mountains, in all parts of Japan the cherry grows wild. The wild species are numerous, but the cultivated garden varieties are still more so. This is due to the tree's nature, which shows great variability; but at the same time it must not be forgotten that it has a long history as a cultivated tree and that the Japanese in their love for it have been very enthusiastic about improving the different varieties. The time of blossoming varies a little according to the species. Spring in Japan gradually comes up from the south, so that the efflorescence depends not only upon the species but also upon geographical distribution. In Formosa in the extreme south it begins to bloom in February, and in southern, central, north-eastern, and northern, Japan from the middle of March to May, gradually becoming later the further north we go,

until when we get to Karahuto and Tisima in the extreme north the blossoms do not appear till July. Thus for about half a year the cherry is always blossoming somewhere in Japan. But, after all, it is in April that the gayest blossoms are to be seen, and it is in April again that the cherry flowers bloom in central Japan where in both species and numbers it is most abundant.

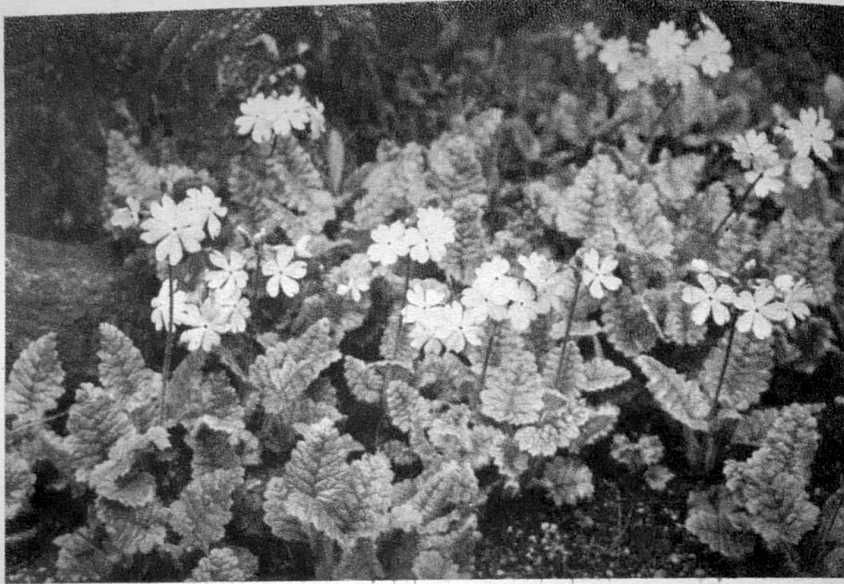
The cherry is a large deciduous tree which usually blossoms before its leaves appear. Flower-buds cover the branches all over, and since they almost all open at the same time the branches sometimes are hidden from view. Seen from a distance they look like clouds or mist. The blossoms are a pale pink but turn almost white when they are in full bloom. Some kinds emit a faint odour. The life of the blossoms is short, practically none lasting for more than a week. The commonest kinds are the *yamazakura* (*Prunus serrulata*, var. *spontanea* and var. *sachalinensis*: "mountain cherry"), *Somei-Yosino* (*P. yedoensis*), *higanzakura* ("equinox cherry"), *sidarezakura* (*P. Itosakura*: "weeping cherry"), etc. The flowers are single or double according to the species. As opposed to the wild species, the cultivated varieties are collectively known as *satozakura* ("domestic cherry"). The flowers show great variety in colour, shape, and inflorescence, so that while one admires each tree or branch one is more impressed by each single blossom. As far as the number of petals is concerned, the wild kinds have single flowers with five petals, but the cultivated ones vary greatly, the one with most being the *kikuzakura* ("the chrysanthemum cherry") which has double flowers with as many as two hundred petals. There is also a cherry known as *ukon-*



The *na-no-hana* or rape-flower

zakura with yellow flowers, and in recent years different kinds have been cultivated for their fruit.

In April not only do trees blossom, but also, of course, many flowers bloom in profusion. Among them, the *sumire* (*Viola* spp.: violet), *tampopo* (*Taraxacum platycarpum*: dandelion), *rengesō* (*Astragalus sinicus*), *tukusi*, *na-no-hana* (*Brassica campestris*, subsp. *chinensis*: rape-flower), and *sakurasō* (*Primula Sieboldii*: primrose) are typical. The *rengesō* which belongs to the Leguminosae family, bears clusters of small reddish-purple flowers and looks delicate and graceful. Its original home was China, but now it grows everywhere throughout Japan. In autumn, after the rice has been cut, the farmers sow the fields with the seeds of this plant, which, when it blossoms in the spring, covers them with a red carpet. The roots



The sakurasō or primrose

contain exostosis bacteria and form a rich nitrogenous manure, and the farmers grow this plant in order to be able to plough it in as green manure in the spring. The seeds scatter in the wind, and the plant may be seen growing by the wayside. The violet grows in fields and mountains, and bears bluish-purple flowers, which, like the *rengesō*, also have extreme delicacy and grace. There are more than ninety kinds growing wild.

The *tukusi* is the stem of the *sugina* (*Equisetum arvense*) and is yellowish brown in colour (*tutiuro* "earth-colour"); in shape it resembles a Japanese writing-brush, so its name is written 土筆 "earth writing-brush." It puts out its sprouts everywhere in the fields and mountains and by the side of the paddies, so that all people who were brought up in the country have happy memories of

the pleasure they had as children in gathering the *tukusi*.

The dandelion belongs to the Compositae, and has stout, rosette-shaped leaves; from the centre of the leaves a flower-stalk rises to a height of about 4 inches, and bears on its top, like a head, a charming yellow flower. The seeds, which are enclosed in a kind of soft down, scatter far and wide in the wind. The rape, which is of Chinese origin, is widely cultivated and is very useful; the young leaves are eaten, and from the seeds oil is extracted which is used both for food and for industrial purposes, while the refuse—oil-cake—serves as a fertilizer. The flowers form cruciform corollae, blooming in bright yellow clusters. Yellow flower-carpetts of rape-blossoms growing here and there in mountain recesses or among the green fields of wheat constitute a true collour scheme of spring.

The primrose is a perennial herbaceous plant growing wild in fields and mountains; it puts out a number of rosette-shaped leaves, from the centre of which rises a flower-stalk about 8 inches in height, and having on its top cymose flowers. The corolla is reddish purple in colour, and has five indentations; thus it looks like a cherry petal, and this is the reason why the plant is called *sakurasō* ("the cherry herb"). Since the flowers are very charming, it has been greatly cultivated from olden times; it is recorded that its cultivation was fashionable more than 260 years ago, and by the end of the Tokugawa period (middle of the 19th cent.) there already existed more than 300 varieties. Although in comparison with the bewitching European primroses most Japanese kinds are plain and homely, this should, we think, be considered as an expression of Japanese taste.



Tumikusa—gathering wild flowers

The gathering of these wild flowers—what we call *tumikusa*—has been practised by town-folk and country-folk, high and low alike, for over a thousand years; it is one of the pleasures of the spring season, and has a very close association with the life of the Japanese. Among these flower there are perhaps some not uncommon in the West, but we have mentioned them here because of this association.

Places famous for their cherry blossom are, of course, crowded with people each spring, and many people go for *tumikusa* wherever the flowers are to be easily found; special trains are provided for places famous for cherry blossom in the neighbourhood of cities.

MAY

When the cherry blossoms and the other flowers of spring pass away, the trees gradually begin to put on their summer attire. The leaves of the different trees first appear as a fresh, vivid green; then little by little they acquire a beautiful glossiness, just as if they had been brought back to life again. The weather tells us that summer has already come, but the calendar calls this month *bansyun* ("late spring"). In Japanese poetical language the flowers of this month are known as *yokwa* ("the left-behind flowers"), and in fact *tutuzi* (azaleas), *huzi* (wistarias), *botan* (peonies), *kiri* (paulownias), and *hōnoki* and *taizanboku* (different kinds of magnolias) flower one after the other as if they were trying to make up for being late.

Among these, the first to which we must pay attention is the *tutuzi* or azaleas because they meet the eye everywhere throughout Japan, and, especially in early summer, make the fields and mountains most beautiful. They belong to the Ericaceae, an order of evergreen shrubs, but some deciduous ones are also found. Among the wild ones alone there are more than sixty species and some thirty varieties; the cultivated ones, being favourites with gardeners, number several hundreds. The flowers have a diameter of about 2 inches and are funnel-shaped and five-petalled; their colours are vermilion, purplish red, scarlet, white, and purple, varying according to the species.



The *tutuzi* or azalea



The *huzi* or wistaria

When they flower the effect is very beautiful, each bush being covered with such a mass of small flowers that the branches and stalks are not visible. In particular those growing wild are often found in such profusion that whole spots appear to consist of nothing but azaleas; there are many noted places of this kind in different parts of the country.

Next I would speak of the wistarias. These belong to the family of Leguminosae, and are large creeping plants, with many purple, butterfly-shaped flowers looking like long tassels. Found in unexpected spots in mountainous districts creeping round great trees, with their long corollae hanging down, they form one of the distinctive sights of Japanese floral scenery. There are two species of native wistarias, *huzi* (*Wistaria floribunda*) and *yama-huzi* (*W. brachybotrys*: "mountain *huzi*"): the latter, which is commonly found south of central Japan, has large, fragrant flowers, with short spikes and dextral stems, whereas the former has long spikes and sinistral stems. Both are cultivated, but for gardens *W. floribunda* is nearly always chosen, and it is trained on wooden trellises. The spikes of the flowers hanging down in their tens and hundreds from the overhead covering of the trellises form a spectacle of matchless beauty. The longer spikes sometimes attain a length of more than 6 feet. In the cultivated varieties, ones with white flowers have been produced.

The *botan* (*Paeonia suffruticosa*: peony) and the *syakuyaku* (*Paeonia albiflora*, var. *trichocarpa*) have very similar flowers, but the former is a bush, having China as its provenance, the latter a herbaceous plant, whose home



The *botan* or peony

is in Siberia. The flowers, which possess a kind of voluptuous beauty, are very large, having a diameter of as much as 4-6 inches, and are of sundry colours, red, reddish purple, white, and purplish black. There are some three hundred varieties. In China from ancient times the *botan* has been known as the queen of flowers, and the *syakuyaku* as the princess, and they have been greatly prized; but in Japan the flower which we consider to be worthy of the name of queen is, after all, the cherry: in the love of simplicity, on the one hand, and of splendour, on the other, may perhaps be discerned the differences in the two peoples' national characters.

JUNE

Now, according to the calendar also, summer has really come. The earth is wholly covered with green, and all nature has put on its summer livery. It is in this month that, the grain harvest being over, water is run into the rice-fields, and the rice seedlings are planted. From about the middle of the month to about the middle of July warm, moist south-east winds blow from the Continent, and practically the whole of Japan is enveloped in the so-called *tuyu* or rainy season, during which we have spells of muggy, oppressive weather.

The flower for this month is indubitably the *hanasyōbu* (*Iris ensata*, var. *hortensis*: iris). This is a plant which is said to have originally grown wild in a small marsh in the mountains of north-eastern Japan, and that it was brought to Edo (the present Tokyo) some three hundred years ago and cultivated there. It is a perennial herbaceous plant belonging to the family of Iridaceae. Its stem is some 30-40 inches high; its leaves are long, sword-shaped, and pointed, with thick, stringy fibres running along the centre. The flowers of ordinal species consist of six petals in two layers; the outer three are large and somewhat round and drooping, the inner three small and pointing upwards. Reddish brown is the usual colour, but purplish red, bluish purple, reddish blue, etc., are also found. Flowers attaining a diameter of 8-12 inches are not uncommon. There are several hundreds of cultivated varieties.



The *hanasyōbu* or iris

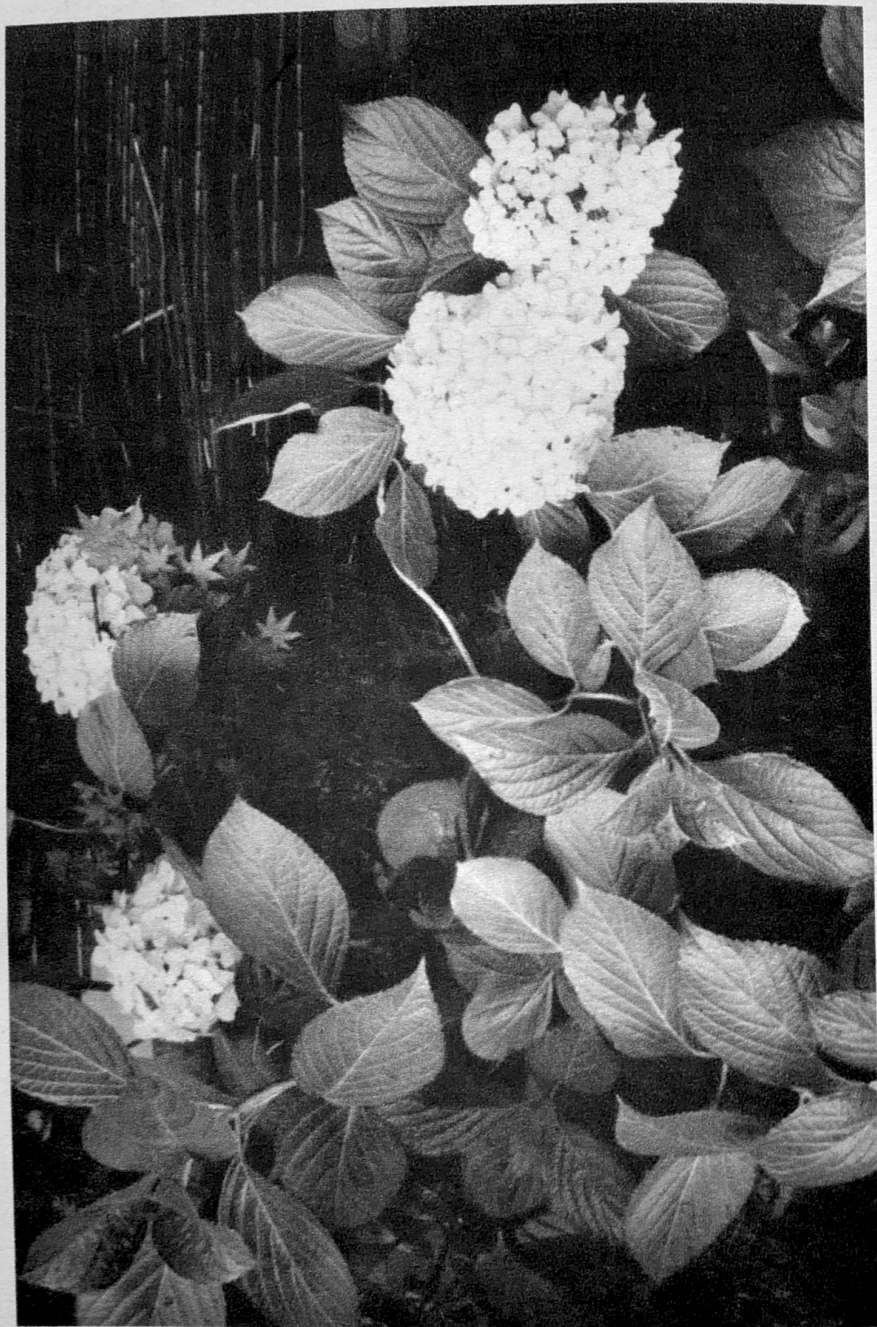


Syōbuta or "iris field" at the Meizi Shrine

Mention must be made of the *syōbuta* ("iris field") in the precincts of the Meizi Shrine, since it is the place where the *hanasyōbu* is found in its greatest perfection. This *syōbuta*, beloved of the late Empress Dowager Shōken (consort of the Emperor Meizi), is situated to the south-west of the main shrine, and has an area of some 700 *tubo* (a little more than half an acre); eighty-four varieties flower there with a great profusion of colour, and its appearance is so magnificent that even professional botanists are amazed. In recent years it has become the custom to invite each year several hundred persons of distinction, foreign diplomats, etc. in order that they may appreciate its charm.

Among the flowers that resemble the *hanasyōbu* there are the *hanaayame* (*Iris sanguinea*, var. *typica*) and the *kakitubata* (*Iris laevigata*).

The *azisai* (*Hydrangea macrophylla*, f. *otaksa*) is a bush, often seen growing in the corner of gardens, whose beautiful flowers with their large calyces cluster together in great numbers and have the shape of hand-balls. The flowers when they first come out are green, blue, pale purple, pink, and so on, but the colours change after a while, so that the *azisai* is also known as the *sitihenge* ("seven transformations"). This plant was first discovered in Japan, and there is an interesting story in connection with its discovery. About one hundred years ago, at the time when Japan was just entering upon the movement that culminated in her present civilization, Ph. Fr. von Siebold arrived at Nagasaki, then the only port open to foreigners. He engaged in the teaching of medicine and treated the sick, but at the same time he made investigations into Japan's fauna and flora, and rendered conspicuous services to the development of science in our country. At this time foreigners suffered many restrictions in the matter of residence, etc., and they were compelled to lead an unsatisfactory existence in strange surroundings. But Siebold's heart was comforted by a certain courtesan named Otaki. Now the time when the *azisai* blooms is, as we said above, a season of gloomy weather unusual for Japan. It appears that Otaki's affection impressed Siebold very deeply, for when after studying this plant he first gave it its scientific nomenclature he included in it the name Otaki (in the form *otaksa*), from which we may imagine how intimate they were. The *azisai* has been developed from the *gaku-azisai* (*Hydrangea macrophylla*, f. *azisai*), which grows wild on the coasts of Japan.



The azisai or hydrangea

JULY

The gloomy clouds are driven away by the fragrant breezes from the south that blow through the green trees and plants; and by the middle of the month typical summer weather is with us, when the heat of the sun's rays becomes intense and we gratefully seek the shade of trees and the cool of the waterside.

Early on July mornings to stand by the edge of a pond and watch the lotus flowers open is, we think, an unforgettable summer experience. The *hasu* (*Nelumbo nucifera*: lotus) was originally a native of tropical Asia, but it has been cultivated in Japan from ancient times, and is seen growing in abundance in ponds in the gardens of temples and private residences. It sends out long leaf-stalks on the surface of the water, and has shield-shaped leaves, round at the top, of 25-35 inches in diameter. The leaves are dark green in colour and have a smooth, glossy surface, with papillae growing out, so that they do not get wet, rain or dew collecting in drops on the surface. The flower-stalks are tall and project above the surface of the water; each bears on its top a single graceful flower about 10 inches in diameter. This flower is composed of many boat-shaped petals; the outer ones are green and look like calyces, but they gradually turn red as they get nearer the centre and become real petals. The lotus opens early in the morning and closes before noon; the next day it opens again in the same way, until,



The hasu or lotus flower



A lotus pond



The *yuri* or lily

after opening on the fourth day, it falls. The plant does not grow well in clear water, but is suited to muddy ponds. It is admired as a symbol of purity because it rises out of muddy water bearing a graceful flower; it is especially prized in Buddhism because it is said to flower in the ponds of Paradise. The lotus is also known as *hatisu* ("beehive"), the reason for this being that the shape of the ovule is an inverted cone with very many small holes and looks just like a beehive. The seeds and the roots of the lotus are used as food.

*Hasu ouru ike no migiwa ni tatazumeba
koromo niowasi kiyoki kaze huku*

"When one stands by the edge of the pond
where the lotus grows
The fresh wind blowing perfumes one's clothes"

Does not this poem well express the feeling of this season and the pure beauty of the lotus?

Further, among the flowers of July we have the lily, of which the Bible says that it is more beautiful than Solomon in all his glory, and the *tukimisō* (*Oenothera tetraptera*) with its yellow, four-petalled flowers, so chaste and simple, that open in the evening in dry river-beds.

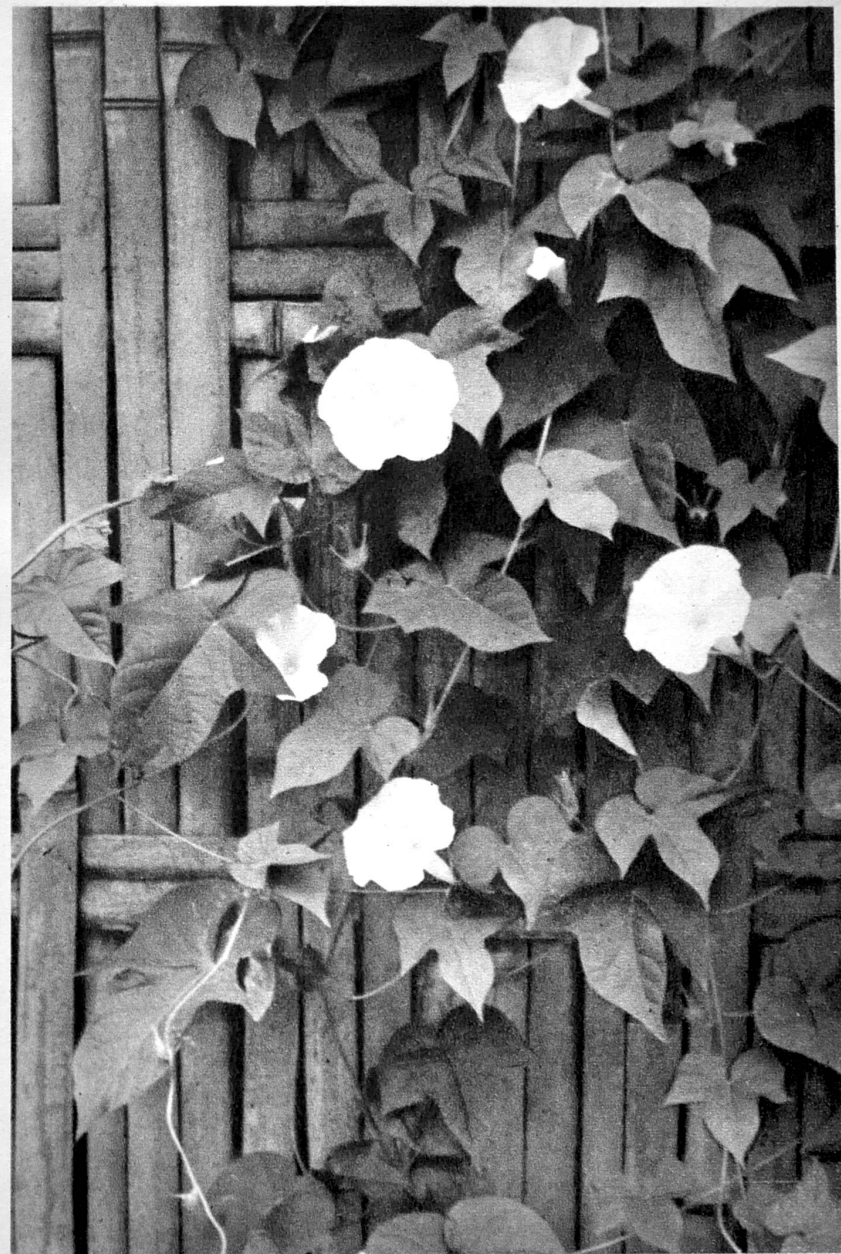
AUGUST

Although people say that the days are broiling, the heat in Japan does not at the most exceed 31° – 32° C. Such days last from the end of July to the beginning of August. In the mountains and fields, as in gardens, one has a choking feeling owing to the fume of grass. Although flowers able to withstand the heat such as the *himawari* (*Helianthus annuus*: sunflower), *matuba-botan* (*Portulaca grandiflora*), dahlia, etc. now flourish, the favourite flower of the Japanese for this month has been from ancient times the *asagao* (*Pharbitis Nil*: morning glory).

Asagao ni turube torarete moraimizu

“A morning glory having taken
my well-bucket, I begged for water”

Though the change of the times has made the sentiment of this poem appear as something belonging to the distant past, yet there is, among the flowers that bloom in summer, none so close to the life of the common people in Japan as the morning glory. Everyone is able to get himself a pot of morning glory. Though his garden be, as we say in Japanese, as narrow as a cat's forehead, if only he sets up this pot of morning glory in it and it blooms, he can appreciate the beauty of summer. The morning glory's original home is in tropical regions, but in China there are records of its use as a medicinal plant 2,200



The *asagao* or morning glory

years ago, and it was introduced into Japan about a thousand years ago. It has been cultivated as an ornamental plant for some 300 years, and numerous varieties have been evolved, so many indeed that they constitute a phenomenon rarely seen in the plant world. The flowers, which look like hanging bells, open early in the morning, but, being very delicate, wither as soon as the sun begins to shine; their colours are blue, purple, red, white, yellow—in fact almost all colours are present; again, there are ones with white edges and variously coloured centres, as well as dappled and speckled ones. In cultivating the morning glory great pains have been taken to cause large flowers to bloom and to change the shape of the flowers. As far as the size is concerned, flowers of as much as about 8 inches in diameter have been produced, and as for the shape, flowers resembling in shape the peony or the chrysanthemum now exist. As the morning glory has long been loved by the Japanese, it appears in many paintings and poems (*uta* and *haiku*) but because of its homeliness and its close association with the life of the common people, it does not often occur as the main theme, but is usually added as one of the natural features of the season.

It is said that autumn begins on the beginning of August, and indeed at the end of this month we can feel the cool breezes in the mornings and evenings, and we know that autumn is creeping near.



By Yukihiro Yasuda

THE MORNING GLORY

SEPTEMBER

Although we speak of the lingering heat of summer, when September comes we can feel a certain decline of the heat, and sometimes we can even hear insects chirping in the bushes in daytime. Especially after the sun has set, and nature is pervaded with the coolness of evening, the sound of the insects becomes clamorous and makes us feel still more that autumn has come. It is also at this time that atmospheric depressions over the sea east of the Philippine Islands turn into typhoons and devastate Japan; but by the middle of the month the atmospheric conditions become settled and we enter upon the equinoctial week, after which we have for about two months a unique season of delightful weather. Wind once in five days, rain one day in ten days, mild weather of this kind makes all sorts of flowers bloom, and ripens various fruits and grains.

Let us go out and have a look at the flowers in bloom.

*Aki no no ni sakitaru hana o oyobiori
kakikazoueba nanakusa no hana*

“Gathering the flowers blooming
in the autumn fields—
When we count them
their kinds are seven”

This is a poem written a thousand years ago, and from ancient times seven flowers, known as *aki no nanakusa* or “the seven herbs of autumn,” have been taken as



The *hagi* cultivated in Japanese garden

the representatives of all autumn flowers, and have been much used as subjects of poetry and painting. All are plain, homely flowers, without the least trace of gaudiness. Even today the *nanakusa* grow wild everywhere in the autumn fields, and are an essential feature of autumn scenery. You may think it strange that such homely flowers should have been chosen as the seven flowers of autumn. But, as we have already pointed out above, it is the Japanese nature to love the simple and chaste, and the sentiment that has been fostered by a thousand years of poetry and painting has now become a part of the national character.

Well, what are the seven flowers of autumn? They are: *hagi*, *susuki*, *kuzu*, *nadesiko*, *ominaesi*, *huzibakama*, and *kikyō*. We will speak of them in this order.

The *hagi* (*Lespedeza* spp.) is a small bush belonging to the Leguminosae and attaining a height of 3-7 feet. It has drooping branches with many reddish-purple or white flowers. It grows wild everywhere in fields and mountains, and is also cultivated in gardens. There are the *yamahagi* (*L. bicolor*, var. *japonica*: "mountain *hagi*"), *Miyaginohagi* (*L. Thunbergii*), *sirahagi* (*L. tomentosa*: "white *hagi*"), etc.

The *susuki* (*Miscanthus sinensis*: pampas grass) is a graminaceous plant having a great power of propagating itself; it attains a height of 3-5 feet, and, like the *hagi*, grows wild everywhere in fields and mountains: it constitutes one of the characteristic features of the scenery of Japan. The flowers form long, thin spiked clusters, with the end divided into several parts; they are covered with many white hairs and look like an animal's tail, and



The susuki or pampas grass

for this reason are also called *obana* ("the tail flower"). The sight of *susuki* flowers covering a whole stretch of field glowing in the evening sun and rippling with silver waves in the autumn breeze is a truly beautiful and graceful picture. The stems and leaves are cut and used for thatching the roofs of farmhouses.

The *kuzu* (*Pueraria Thunbergiana*, var *typica*: arrowroot) is a creeper belonging to the Leguminosae, and puts out three large lobules. The leaves are covered with white hair at the back and glow with a silver colour. The silvery elegance of the leaves as they turn over in the wind is much admired, but I am afraid that the Japanese of today, accustomed as they are to city life, have no longer the leisure to admire this artistic effect. The flowers are reddish purple in colour and form spikes. The plant is deciduous, and has great vigour; winding round great trees, it attains a length of as long as 60-100 feet. The roots contain much starch, and it is from these that the arrowroot so widely used in making Japanese cakes is obtained.

The *nadesiko* (*Dianthus superbus*) has a slender stem of some 20-30 inches in height, and its leaves are very narrow and pointed; it bears graceful pink five-petalled flowers, the petals coming to a fine point at the ends. Growing wild in dry river-beds (*kawara*), by the seashore, and in the fields (*no*) and mountains, it is variously known as *kawara-nadesiko*, *no-nadesiko*, etc. A lovely Japanese woman is called *yamatonadesiko*, a reference to the graceful beauty of this flower.

The *ominaesi* (*Patrinia scabiosaefolia*), a perennial belonging to the Valerianaceae, bears clusters of small



The ominaesi, one of "the seven herbs of autumn"



The kikyō bears graceful bell-shaped flowers

yellow flowers on its stems. Although the flowers are extremely plain, the *ominaesi* is beloved for the tender, yielding appearance of its frail-looking flowers and leaves.

The *fuzibakama* (*Eupatorium japonicum*) attains a height of about 3 feet, and bears lavender-coloured flowers clustering on its stems; it grows in mountainous districts and by the side of rivers, and is also cultivated as a garden plant. The stalks and leaves have a faint fragrance; in ancient times they were dried and used as a perfume.

The *kikyō* (*Platycodon glaucum*) is a perennial herbaceous plant of the Campanulaceae family, and bears neat, graceful bell-shaped flowers with five indentations at the top. The colour of the flowers is usually a purplish blue, but white ones are also found; the diameter is little more than one inch, which makes the *kikyō* the largest flower among the *nanakusa*. It is cultivated in gardens, but the wild ones are finer.

We have given above simply a little general information about the *aki no nanakusa*. Now the sky of Japan is clearest and most delightful in autumn, so that autumn is the best time for viewing the moon. From olden times it has been a family custom to hold a "moon-viewing party" on the 15th day of the 8th month (lunar calendar). The seven flowers of autumn are set out on the edge of the verandah, and a quiet party is held.

Generally speaking, in comparison with the flowers of spring, they are for the most part quiet flowers of a simple elegance; to gaze to one's heart's content at these flowers growing in the fields has a charm different but no less enjoyable than that which we experience in spring.



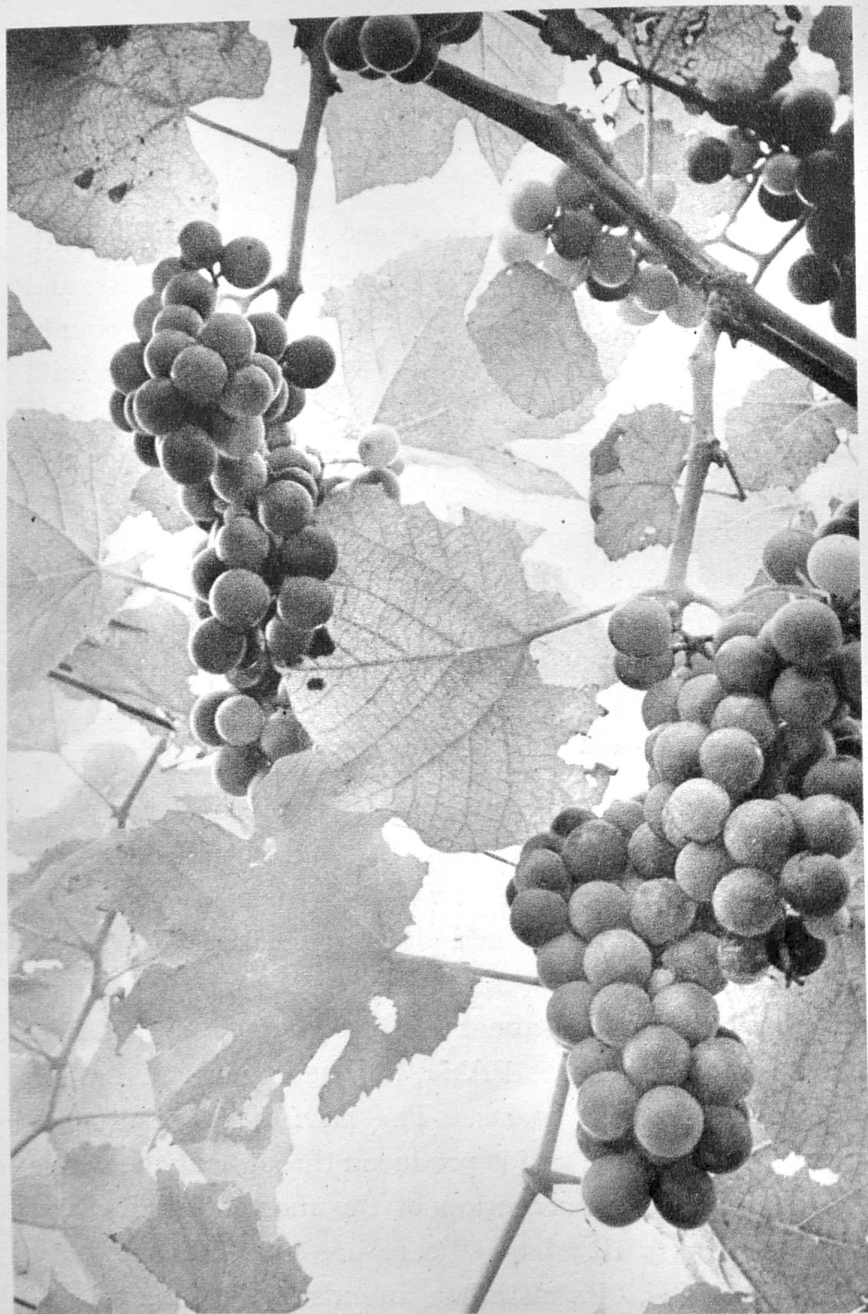
THE WHITE KIKYO

By Kokei Kobayasi

OCTOBER

October in Japan, when the sky is clear and limpid, and all nature is pervaded with a spirit of freshness, and the temperature is most agreeable—October is certainly not inferior to, and may even surpass, April with its mild spring days. It is the season when, as it is said, “the sky is high, and the horses grow fat,” and when the fields and mountains put on red tints, and trees and plants bear their fruits, and man and beast fatten in health.

The flowers of the various trees, which from spring to early summer bloomed as if rivalling one another in beauty, now turn into ripe fruit, and October is a month for fruits rather than for flowers. Apples, grapes, figs, *kaki* (persimmons), and chestnuts are the most important. Since among these the persimmon is the one that gives the richest colour to autumn in Japan, I will say something about it here. The *kaki* (*Diospyros kaki*) is a special product of the Orient, and does not exist in Europe or America. It is said, however, that in recent years a kind of persimmon, about as big as an apple in size, introduced from Central Asia, has been cultivated along the Mediterranean coasts. The *kaki* is especially appreciated in Japan, and is produced throughout the whole country with the exception of the most northerly and most southerly districts. There are more than twenty different kinds. Its taste has an extremely Oriental flavour, and most Japanese recommend it as the most delicious



The grapes are getting ripe



Branches laden with ripened *kaki*

of all fruits; apart from its taste, its beautiful reddish-orange colour also is not to be despised. The scene presented by the branches heavily laden with ripened *kaki* exists in every country village, and is a typical symbol of autumn in Japan.

There are two kinds of *kaki*, the sweet kind and the astringent kind. The former is eaten just as it is taken from the tree, whereas the latter is eaten only after its astringency is removed and the fruit made sweet; when the astringency is removed in a barrel (*taru*), it is called *tarugaki*. Astringent *kaki* become sweet in the following way: the astringent element—tannin—is changed by the enzyme in the flesh of the fruit into tannin oxide; as an artificial measure, in order to make the fruit become sweet more quickly, alcohol or warm water is added to facilitate the change.

Further, in October various kinds of mushrooms grow in the woods, and large numbers of people go out on "mushroom-hunts," one of the pleasant pastimes of autumn. Among the edible kinds the commonest are the *matutake* (*Armillaria catigata*), *simezi* (*Tricoloma conglobatum*), *hatutake* (*Lactaria Hatudake*), *siitake* (*Cortinellus shiitake*), etc. The *matutake* has the best flavour and is most appreciated; it must not be missing from the table in autumn. It grows in red-pine woods, for the mycelium—the matrix from which the *matutake* grows—is parasitic on the roots of the red pine.

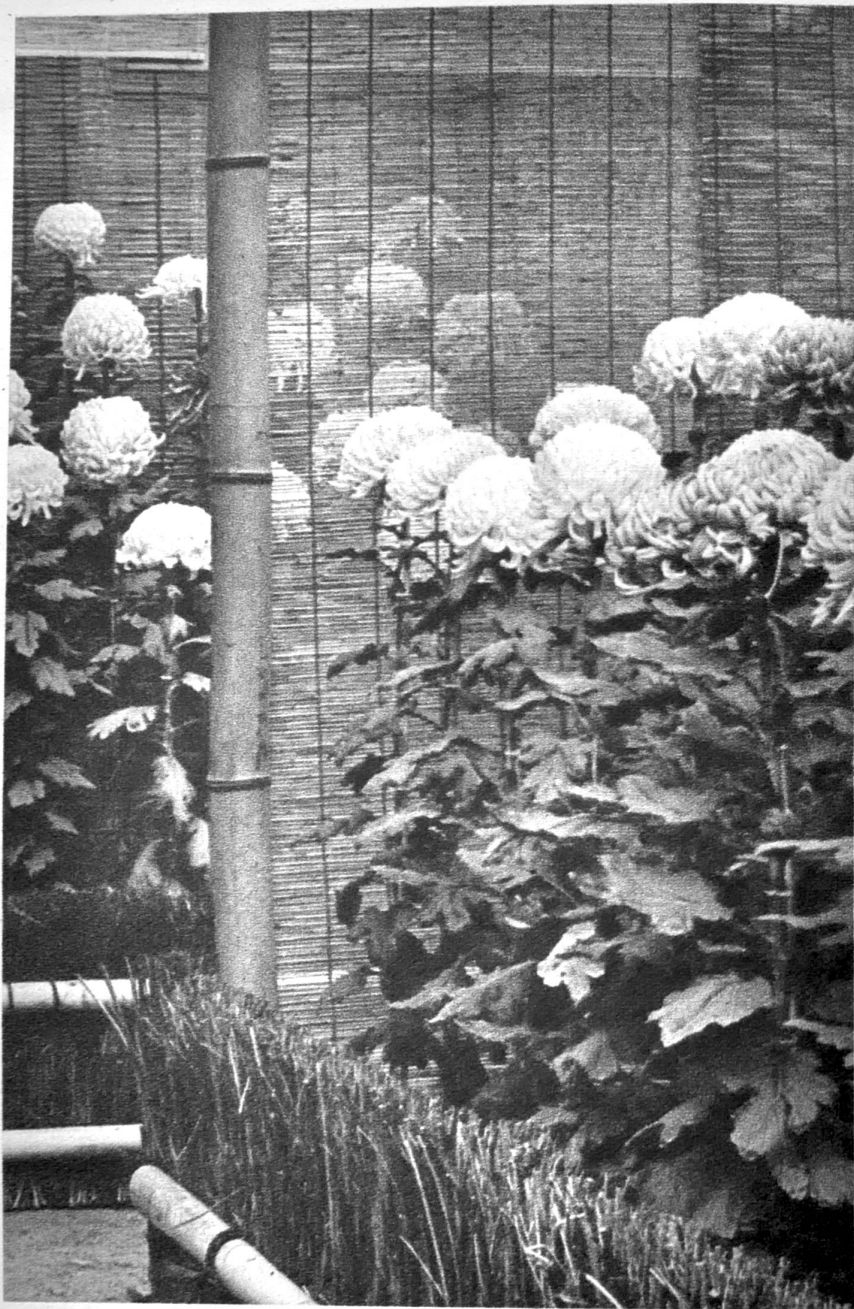
In the paddy-fields the rice which rippled in golden waves in the autumn breezes is harvested during the month or at the beginning of November, and little by little autumn becomes far advanced.

NOVEMBER

Fruit-ripening autumn is over; when the frost begins to fall in the mornings autumn has advanced still further, and we can feel a chilliness in the air. The mountains become gay for a while with red and yellow hues; of flowers there is only the chrysanthemum to give colour to autumn as it dies. But the red foliage (*momizi*) of the trees and the chrysanthemums are able by themselves to make both the country and the garden as beautiful as did all the hundred flowers of spring. Places noted for their *momizi* or chrysanthemums are crowded with people, for November offers the last chance for outings in the year.

Just as the cherry is considered to be the queen of flowers in spring, so the chrysanthemum is to be regarded as the queen of flowers in autumn. We suppose that you already know that the crest of the Japanese Imperial Family is a chrysanthemum flower and as such is revered by the whole nation. Since we have touched upon the subject of crests, we had better tell you here that every family in Japan has a definite family crest of its own. Altogether, in the whole of Japan, there are probably several thousand kinds of crests; most of the marks are derived from plants, and consist of designs adapted from flowers or leaves. This perhaps constitutes a proof of the deep relation between plants and our national life.

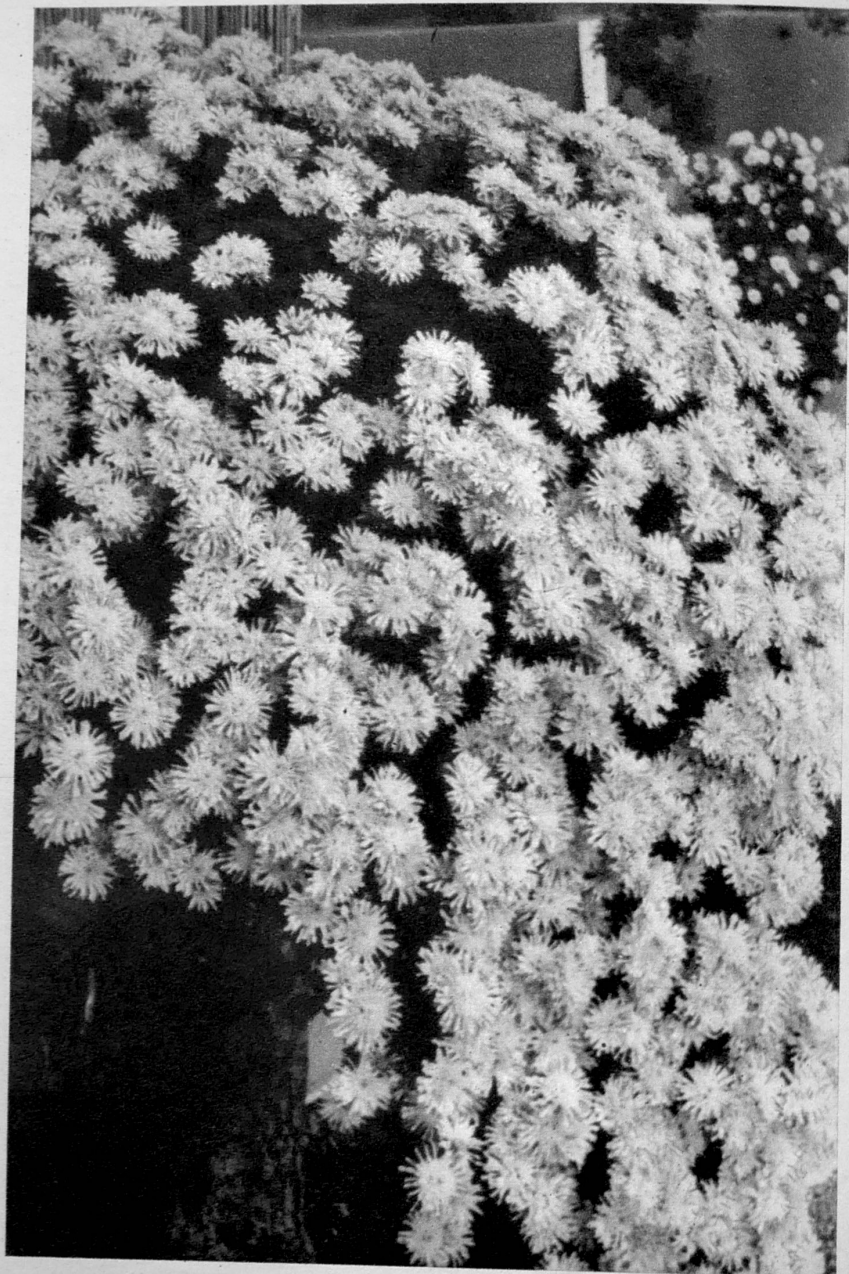
The chrysanthemum came originally from China, but it has a long history since it came to Japan, and it has



The *kiku* or chrysanthemum



Two kinds of chrysanthemums



Chrysanthemums known as *kengaizukuri*

been actively cultivated for some three hundred years. The enthusiasm displayed in its cultivation and the vast number of its varieties stand alone in the botanical world. In the season, chrysanthemum exhibitions are held in many places, and the efforts that have been spent on, and the results obtained from, cultivation are shown to those interested. Cultivated chrysanthemums are usually divided into three great classes, large ones, medium ones, and small ones; but the varieties are counted in hundreds. The flowers originally had two kinds of corollae, lingulate and tubular; but as a result of cultivation there are now not a few consisting entirely of lingulate corollae. Extremely beautiful varieties have been produced by effecting changes in the size, number, shape and colour of the corollae. The large kinds of chrysanthemum have only one large flower on one stalk; this effect is obtained by cutting off all the side shoots and thus causing the one flower to become bigger. The large and medium chrysanthemums are admired for the shape and colour of each flower, but the small chrysanthemums, each of which bears many flowers, is praised as one plant or as one pot: sometimes one plant bears as many as a thousand flowers, and presents a magnificent sight. Especially beautiful are the ones known as *kengaizukuri* which show the natural grace of blooming chrysanthemum flowers hanging down over a cliff. These bear innumerable flowers, and sometimes have branches as long as 6 feet. The Imperial Family also cultivate chrysanthemums at one of the detached palaces and invite, among others, the representatives of the foreign powers to view them in autumn. Similarly, invitations to view the cherry blossoms are issued in spring.

For adorning the fields and mountains of late autumn there is nothing equal to the red maple leaves. These are not flowers, but they colour autumn more beautifully than flowers do. In Japanese we use the word 紅葉, which is read either *kōyō* or *momizi*. The word *momizi* in Japanese has two meanings: in its general sense, it is used for all leaves that have turned red or yellow through the action of frost; in its special sense, for maple-trees only. The reason why the word is used particularly of maple leaves is that these are especially excellent and show a most beautiful red. Leaves turn red in autumn because the trees function very actively in summer, absorbing water and nourishment through their roots, and flourishing unrestrictedly, and make much chlorophyll and receive sufficient sunshine, so that the leaves show great activity, and become a bright green through the presence of chlorophyll; but when with the coming of autumn the weather turns colder, the activity of the trees gradually lessens, and they are not able to absorb as much water and nourishment through their roots as they could in summer; when this happens, the chlorophyll in the leaves little by little decomposes, and begins to disappear, and a yellow pigment makes its appearance; this is the beginning of the *momizi*, but in the meantime there are falls of rain and, as is customary at this season, great differences in the day and night temperatures occur: sugar begins to form inside the leaves, and a red pigment, different from the yellow one, appears. Thanks to the presence of this red pigment, which is of the same nature as that which makes flowers red, the leaves gradually become red. If the sun shines too strongly, the leaves lose their moisture

The *momizi* or maple leaves

and dry up, and do not become beautiful; but if, when the colour of the leaves is beginning to turn, low temperatures are experienced, very fine *momizi* are quickly produced. About this time, if it rains for two or three days in succession and the temperature sinks considerably, the mountains all turn into a red and yellow glory. The finest colours are provided by the *kaede* (*Acer* spp.), of which there are more than twenty species. Apart from the *kaede*, other noteworthy trees are: *haze-no-ki* (*Rhus succedanea*), *tutaurusi* (*R. Toxicodendron*, var. *radicans*), *nurude* (*R. javanica*), *tuta* (*Parthenocissus Thunbergii*), *kaki* (*Diospyros kaki*), *tutuzi* (*azaleas*), etc. Some trees produce only yellow pigment, and their leaves only turn yellow. The *katura* (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*) and the *ityō* (*Ginkgo biloba*) also produce beautiful yellow leaves.

For the reasons given above, beautiful *momizi* are not to be found in dry countries. Japanese climate is suitable for the production of beautiful *momizi*; further, it is rich in trees with leaves that habitually change colour, and thus enjoys this wonderful spectacle in late autumn.

DECEMBER

We have finally reached the last month of the year, which, according to the Japanese calendar, is the first month of winter. Even in December, up to about the middle of the month, there are still, when the weather is clear, some warm, pleasant days just like spring, and known as *koharubiyori* or "little-spring weather"; but the days are getting ever shorter, and sometimes when it rains it also sleets.

Except such chrysanthemums as still survive as the last flowers of the year, all the flowers have gone; the trees have lost their leaves and are preparing to withstand the cold. *Tya-no-hana* (tea blossoms) and *sazanka* (*Camellia Sasanqua*) are about the only flowers of this month. *Tya-no-hana* are the blossoms of the famous Japanese green tea, and are white and very lovely; they have five petals and long yellow stamens. The leaves are gathered in May.

The *sazanka* bears a certain resemblance to the camellia (*tubaki*), but it is quieter in appearance. The flowers are pale pink or white. It is cultivated in gardens, and is used for making hedges; in the south of Japan it is found growing wild.

Although they are not flowers, there are certain plants which we very much wish to mention in connection with the Japanese Floral Calendar. These are the *sasa* and the bamboo (*take*). *Sasa* spreads over wide areas in



The bamboo grove

mountainous districts, forming, as it were, a great multitude, and constitutes one of the typical sights of the Japanese landscape. When a *sasa* bush has been cut down or destroyed by fire, it starts to grow all over again; seen from a distance, it looks just like a grassy plain. *Sasa* also grows under trees and spreads all over the ground; and it is not rare for its roots to spread with such vitality that it overwhelms all other plants and seizes the ground entirely for itself. Among the various species of *sasa* we may mention the *kumazasa* (*Sasa Veitchii*), which, grown to a height of about 12 inches, is planted in gardens. The leaves appear in spring, and in autumn, after they have attained their full growth, gradually begin to wither at the edges; as they dry up they become white, only the centre part of the leaf remaining green, and in this way go through the winter. The sight of the *kumazasa* braving the snow adds brightness to the winter garden.

The bamboo forms thickets and grows both in mountainous regions and on plains; it is an element of the scenery in all parts of the country. It puts out sprouts in early summer, known as *takenoko* or "bamboo sprouts"; they are soft and good to eat, and are much used as food. The grown trunks have great resilience, and are widely employed in building and in making implements and utensils. The trunk attains a height of some 35-70 feet and is hollow inside; it is jointed in various places, and puts out branches and leaves from these joints. The leaves are evergreen and never change, giving us an impression of freshness. Having been from ancient times in close relation with the life of the Japanese, the bamboo is often depicted in painting and introduced into poetry.



The *kumazasa* bush

In Japan the cold in winter is never really very severe, but by the end of December all nature looks bleak and desolate, and only the evergreen trees, able to withstand the cold, proudly display their green foliage. In recent years the custom, introduced from the West, of using holly as a Christmas decoration has become quite popular.

(194L 20-2038)

<p>FLORAL CALENDAR OF JAPAN 日本の花暦</p>	
<p>昭和十三年三月廿五日印刷 昭和十三年四月一日發行</p>	
<p>發行兼 印刷者</p>	<p>東京市麹町區丸ノ内一丁目 財團國際觀光協會 法人 宮部幸三 東京市牛込區國町七番地</p>
<p>印刷所</p>	<p>大日本印刷株式會社 榎町工場</p>
<p>發賣所 SELLING AGENTS</p>	<p>丸善株式會社 東京市日本橋區通二丁目 MARUZEN CO., LTD., TOKYO ジャパン・ツーリスト・ビューロー (日本旅行協會) 東京縣內 JAPAN TOURIST BUREAU TOKYO</p>

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